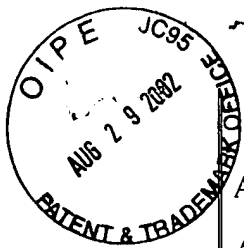


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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: George D. Papasouliotis and Robert D. Tas

Assignee: Novellus Systems, Inc.

Title: Method Of Chemical Modification Of Structure Topography

Serial No.: 10/004,386 ✓ Filing Date: December 3, 2001

Examiner: Craig Thompson Group Art Unit: 2812

Docket No.: M-12019 US

San Francisco, California
August 29, 2002

Box RCE
Commissioner For Patents
Washington, D. C. 20231

REQUEST FOR CONTINUED EXAMINATION (RCE)

Sir:

This is a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) under 37 C.F.R. § 1.114 of the above-identified application.

Please consider the Information Disclosure Statement, which is being submitted with this request.

The RCE fee required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(e) is authorized in an accompanying transmittal letter.

Please contact the undersigned attorney with any questions concerning this request or the above-identified patent application.

EXPRESS MAIL LABEL NO:

EL 947 824 605 US

Respectfully submitted,

K. Alison de Runtz
Reg. No. 37,119

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02 FC:103 162.00 CH

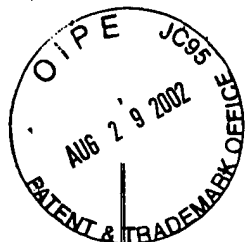
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Serial No. 10/004,386

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MoulishIN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: George D. Papasouliotis and Robert D. Tas
Assignee: Novellus Systems, Inc.
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Serial No.: 10/004,386 / Filing Date: December 3, 2001
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PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Sir:

This preliminary amendment is submitted prior to any examination of this application on the merits pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.114.. Entry of this preliminary amendment and a first examination on the merits in view thereof are respectfully requested.

In the Claims:

Claims 31-34 were cancelled by Examiner's amendment as being directed to a non-elected invention, without prejudice to being pursued in a divisional application. Claims 1-30 have been allowed.

Please delete Claim 5. Please amend Claim 30, such that it reads as set forth below. Appendix I, showing Claim 30 in marked form, is appended hereto. Appendix II, showing all of the pending claims, Claims 1-4 and 6-30, in clean form, is also appended hereto.

30. (Amended) The process of Claim 21, wherein the rate of said chemically etching increases when low frequency power is increased.